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TOBIAS LEAR

PREFACE.

The Committee on Publication, in submitting the following reprint of one of the very earliest publications relating to the District of Columbia, deem it proper to give a brief sketch of its author.

Tobias Lear (1762-1816) was a native of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and a graduate of Harvard College. From the year 1786, Lear was General Washington's private secretary, residing at Mount Vernon as a member of the family, and acting as tutor to Mrs. Washington's two grandchildren, George Washington Parke Custis, and Miss Nellie Parke Custis (afterwards Mrs. Lawrence Lewis).

Washington wrote regarding what were to be Lear's employments, February 6, 1781:

"Mr. Lear, or any other who may come into my family in the blended characters of preceptor to the children, and clerk or private secretary to me, will sit at my table, will live as I live, will mix with the company who resort to the house, and will be treated in every respect with civility and proper attention."*

For his services in this capacity Mr. Lear received two hundred dollars a year.

The little book herewith reprinted was issued anonymously (29 pp., 12mo, New York, 1793) and is believed to be the earliest separate monograph relating to the District of Columbia and the Potomac River. It

* Washington's Writings (Sparks's ed.) 9: 154.

has sometimes been attributed to Andrew Ellicott, but Lear's authorship is clearly proven by a letter from Washington to him, dated November 6, 1793, and preserved in the Library of Congress.

Tobias Lear had the distinction of being personally attendant at Washington's bedside during his last illness (of less than twenty-four hours) and of making arrangements for his funeral, which was solemnized at Mount Vernon, December 18, 1799. Mr. Lear wrote at the time a detailed account of Washington's last hours, bearing every mark of care and authenticity, which fills ten pages in W. C. Ford's edition of Washington's Writings.* By Washington's will, Lear was given a life-estate in a farm of 360 acres, which he had previously held on a perpetual lease from Washington.

After Washington's death, Lear went as U. S. Consul to Santo Domingo (1802), and in 1804 became consul-general at Algiers. Several years later, he was in the service of the War Department in a clerical capacity, and died by his own hand, October 11, 1816.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION.

* Ford's "Writings of George Washington," v. 14, pp. 245-257.

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
RIVER POTOMACK,
THE
COUNTRY ADJACENT,
AND THE
CITY OF WASHINGTON.

NEW-YORK:
Printed by SAMUEL LONDON and SON, No. 5, Water-Street.
—1793.—

The Permanent Seat of the Government of the United States, having been fixed on the river Potomack, by a solemn Act of the Government—This River, the Country about it, and particularly the Spot chosen for the Seat of Government, become Objects of interesting Enquiry, both at Home and Abroad.—This Consideration has drawn the following Observations from a Person who, to a general knowledge of the Potomack, and its Dependencies, adds the advantage of having been long in a situation, where he has had an opportunity of obtaining the best information on the points mentioned in the following Sheets.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

The River Potomack forms a junction with the Bay of Chesapeak, one hundred and fifty miles from the sea. From thence to the head of tide-water is about one hundred and sixty miles.

“This River is seven and an half miles wide at its mouth; four and an half at Nomony Bay; three at Aquier; one and an half at Hollowing-Point; one and a quarter at Alexandria; and the same from thence to the City of Washington, which is within three miles of the head of tide-water.—Its soundings are seven fathoms at the mouth; five at St. George’s Island; four and an half at Lower Matchodic; three at Servan’s Point, and the same from thence to the City.” (Mr. Jefferson’s Notes on Virginia.)

From the Capes of the Chesapeak to the City of Washington, is upwards of three hundred miles; but the navigation is easy and perfectly safe.—* A vessel of twelve hundred hogsheads of tobacco has loaded at and

* Report of the Committee appointed by the Merchants of George-Town and Alexandria.

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sailed from Alexandria, and one of seven hundred hogsheads at George-Town, which is above the City.

At the City the water rises four feet in a common tide.

From the City of Washington to Cumberland, a flourishing town at the head of the river, is about two hundred and thirty miles as the river runs.

Early in life General Washington contemplated the opening of this river, from tide-water to its source, so as to make it navigable for such vessels as were suitable for carrying the produce of the country to the shipping ports below. His public employments in the part of the country through which the Potomack and its branches run, had given him a more complete knowledge of this river, than almost any other man possessed at that time; and his mind was strongly impressed with its future importance. But the period for undertaking a work of such magnitude had not yet arrived.—The country was then but sparsely inhabited—Canals and Locks but little understood, especially in America; and but few men of property were willing to engage in an undertaking, the cost of which they could not clearly calculate, and the profits of which were to many doubtful.—General Washington, however, kept the object steadily in view, waiting until time and circumstances should enable him to bring it forward, with a prospect of success. The

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war with Great-Britain took place about the time when the importance of this object began to be understood, and a willingness to embark in it began to appear among men of property. Until the close of that war nothing, however, could be attempted in the business.—But no sooner had a happy termination of it enabled General Washington to retire from his high public station, than he resumed this object which had so long before occupied his mind. He found gentlemen of the first property and respectability in the neighborhood of the Potomack, both in Virginia and Maryland, ready to engage in the enterprise. In the year 1784, a com-

pany was formed for the purpose of removing the obstructions and opening the navigation of the River from its source down to tide-water, and an act of incorporation, passed by the assemblies of Virginia and Maryland, authorizing the Company to take the necessary measures for carrying into effect the objects for which they were incorporated—and granting to them, forever, the tolls which may arise therefrom; which tolls are fixed by the same law that empowers the Company to undertake the business. The sum agreed upon to complete the navigation was fifty thousand pounds sterling, divided into five hundred shares, of one hundred pounds each, to be paid by such instalments, and at such times, as the Directors of the Company should find necessary for the prosecution of the work. Ten years were allowed the Company to finish the business.

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The Company have prosecuted their work with great success, and what is not common in undertakings of this nature, they will complete it for something less than the sum subscribed. The rate of toll being fixed, and knowing with some accuracy the quantity of produce that is now brought by land from those parts of the country, which will, of course, throw the same upon the river, they have a certainty of receiving, on the first opening of the river, a handsome percentage on their capital, (even without calculating upon the articles which will be sent up the river,) and the increase will be almost incredible. Those who best know the circumstances of the country, and some, who are not among the most sanguine with respect to the profits of this undertaking, have no doubt of the capital's pro-

ducing fifty per cent. annually, in less than ten years from the time of the toll's commencing.

The principal work in completing the above mentioned navigation, is at the Great Falls, fourteen miles above the City of Washington—at the Little Falls, four miles above the said City, and in clearing the river between these two Falls. At the Great Falls, the water falls 72 feet in one mile and an half—and at the Little Falls 36 feet 8 inches in about two miles.—At the former there will be six, and at the latter, three locks. The locks at the Little Falls will be finished this season, and fit for use; those at the Great Falls, are in forward-

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ness—and, with the clearing the bed of the river between the two Falls, will be completed next year. This will finish the navigation of the main river, from Cumberland down to tide-water, and enable the Company to receive the reward of their expence and labor. Boats, carrying from one hundred and fifty to two hundred barrels of flour, already pass from Cumberland to the Great Falls; and many thousand barrels of flour have actually been brought in boats to the latter place during the present year.

Besides the main river of the Potomack, its numerous and extensive branches offer the prospect of transporting to the main river, and from thence to the shipping ports, an immense quantity of produce.

The following are the principal streams which empty into the Potomack above tide-water, and the distances to which they are navigable in their natural state, from their conflux with the Potomack.—

Patterson's Creek, which falls into the river two

miles below Cumberland, is navigable twenty miles above its mouth;—The South Branch, seventeen miles below Cumberland, is navigable one hundred miles;—Cape-Capeon, sixty miles below, is navigable twenty miles;—Connogochegue, ninety miles below, is navigable twenty-four miles;—Opecan, one hundred and twenty-five miles below, is navigable twenty-five miles from its mouth,

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and within a few miles of Winchester, which, after Lancaster, is the largest inland town in the United States;—The Shannandoah, one hundred and thirty miles below, runs into the country at right angles from the Potomack, nearly two hundred miles, and the navigation of it, for one hundred and fifty miles of that distance, is but little interrupted; the chief obstruction is, where it enters the Potomack; and, so trifling is that, compared with the great advantages of this noble branch, that its removal and clearing other parts, will not cost more than twenty-five thousand dollars. The Potomack company have already made a beginning on this work.—The Monococy, one hundred and fifty miles below Cumberland, is navigable thirty miles above its mouth. This branch is within two miles of Frederick-Town, in Maryland, one of the largest inland towns in the United States.*

These several streams, as well as the main river, pass through a country not exceeded, in fertility of soil and salubrity of air, by any in America, if any in the world; and few parts of America can boast of being equally healthy with the banks of this river, and the adjacent country.

The number of inhabitants living in the several counties of Virginia and Maryland, bordering upon the

* Report of the Committee appointed by the Merchants of Georgetown and Alexandria, which, being founded on the actual observations made by order of the Directors of the Potomack Company, may be deemed authentic.

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Potomack or its branches, amount to upwards of three hundred thousand, according to the census taken by order of the general government, in the year 1791.— They are all, or so nearly so, that not one fiftieth part can be excepted, cultivators of the soil. It is, therefore, easy to conceive, that they must send an immense quantity of produce to the shipping ports on the river. But, still so extensive is the country through which the Potomack and its branches pass, that it is yet but thinly settled; its inhabitants are, however, very rapidly multiplying, as well by emigration as by the natural course of population.

The productions of the country consist of wheat, tobacco, Indian-corn or maize, rye, oats, potatoes, beans, peas, and, in short, of every article that the best farming lands are capable of producing. Hemp and flax are cultivated here, and yield large quantities. The land is rich in pasturage—most parts of it admirably adapted to sheep; and a heavy growth of timber, fit for ship-building, as well as for every other purpose, is found here. There is, near Cumberland, and within ten or twelve miles of the river, a tract of country that abounds with very large white-pine trees, suitable for masts of ships; some of these trees are from five to six feet in diameter, and run up one hundred feet without a branch.

Slate, marble, free-stone of the red and grey Portland-kind, and iron ore, are found in abundance on the

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banks of the river. Several large iron-works are already established, which furnish bar-iron and castings of an excellent quality. Limestone abounds every where. Of coal too, there is an inexhaustible quantity, near Cumberland, laying on the banks of the river, and in other parts at no great distance from it; from whence, in future, not only all the towns and manufactories on the river may be supplied, but it may become a capital article of exportation.

There is in the river a great plenty of very fine fish. Large quantities of shad and herrings are annually taken here and exported to the West-Indies.

From the preceding observations, it is easy to conceive that the commerce of this river cannot be inconsiderable: And a single view of the situation upon which the city of Washington is laid out, points out that spot as the most eligible on the river, for a large commercial town.

The City of Washington lays in latitude $38^{\circ} 53''$.—It is situated on the east side of the Potomack, about four miles below the head of tide-water, and extends down the river nearly four miles, to an angle, which is formed by the junction of the eastern branch with the Potomack; it then runs along the eastern branch for more than two miles.—Its general width is about one mile and three quarters.

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The eastern branch affords one of the finest harbors imaginable for ships. It is more than a mile wide at

its mouth, and holds nearly the same width for almost the whole distance to which the city extends upon it; it then narrows gradually to its head, which is about ten miles from its conflux with the Potomack. The channel of this branch lays on the side next the city; it has in all parts of it, as far as the city extends, from twenty to thirty-five feet of water. Above the city, it is only navigable for small craft. The channel is generally so near the city, that a wharf, extended forty or fifty feet from the bank, will have water enough for the largest ships to come up, and discharge or receive their cargoes. The land on each side of the branch is sufficiently high to secure shipping from any wind that blows; and one very important advantage which this branch has, as a harbor, over all extensive rivers which freeze and are liable to be broken up suddenly by freshes or land floods, is, that on account of the short distance to which it extends into the land, no rapidity of current is ever occasioned by freshes; and, while vessels in the main river, if they should happen to be caught there by the ice, are liable to receive great injury, and are sometimes totally lost by it, those in the branch lay in perfect security.—It has also the advantage of being open some days later in the winter and earlier in the spring than the main river at Georgetown, and the upper parts of the

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city. The river generally shuts up about Christmas, and is open again the latter part of February, or very early in March. Sometimes there are only short interruptions by ice through the winter, and sometimes it happens that it is not closed so as to prevent the navigation during the winter—This was the case last winter.

The main channel of the Potomack opposite the city, running near the Virginia shore, that part of the city which lays upon the Potomack has only a small channel, carrying from eight to twelve feet of water, until you come within about three quarters of a mile of Georgetown, when the channel turning between Mason's-Island and the city, gives a depth of water from twenty to thirty feet close in with the shore of the city. This renders the water-lots within that small space very valuable; for any ships that come up the river may here lay within twenty yards of the city, and the boats which bring the produce of the country down the river, may at all times come here deep loaded as they come down; whereas they could not go, thus loaded, down to the eastern branch, unless in very smooth weather.

Before a particular description of the Spot, &c., on which the City of Washington is laid out, be given, it may not be improper to note the constitutional and legal Ground upon which the Location of the City is made.

The Constitution of the United States grants to

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Congress the power "to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States."

In conformity with this constitutional power, the following Act was passed on the 16th of July, 1790.

"An ACT for establishing the Temporary and Permanent Seat of Government of the United States.

"Section 1st.—BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That a District of

Territory, not exceeding ten miles square, to be located, as hereafter directed, on the river Potomack, at some place between the mouths of the eastern branch and Conogochegue, be, and the same is hereby accepted for the Permanent Seat of the Government of the United States: *Provided nevertheless*, That the operations of the laws of the states, within such district, shall not be affected by this acceptance, until the time fixed for the removal of the Government thereto, and until Congress shall otherwise by law provide.

“Sect. 2d.—And be it further enacted, That the President of the United States be authorized to appoint, and by supplying vacancies, happening from refusal to

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act, or other causes, to keep in appointment, as long as may be necessary, three Commissioners, who, or any two of whom, shall, under the direction of the President, survey, and by proper metes and bounds, define and limit a district of territory, under the limitations above mentioned; and the district, so defined, limited and located, shall be deemed the District accepted by this act for the permanent seat of the Government of the United States.

“Sect. 3d.—And be it enacted, That the said Commissioners, or any two of them, shall have power to purchase or accept such quantity of land, on the eastern side of the said river, within the said district, as the President shall deem proper for the use of the United States, and according to such plans as the President shall approve, the said Commissioners, or any two of them, shall, prior to the first Monday in December, in the year one thousand eight hundred, provide suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress, and of

the President, and for the Public Offices of the Government of the United States.

“Sect. 4th.—And be it enacted, That for defraying the expence of such purchases and buildings, the President of the United States be authorized and requested to accept grants of money.

“Sect. 5th.—And be it enacted, That prior to the

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first Monday in December next, all offices attached to the Seat of the Government of the United States shall be removed to, and until the said first Monday in December, one thousand eight hundred, shall remain at the city of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, at which place the session of Congress next ensuing the present shall be held.

“Sect. 6th.—And be it enacted, That on the said first Monday in December, in the year one thousand eight hundred, the Seat of the Government of the United States shall, by virtue of this act, be transferred to the district and place aforesaid.—And all offices, attached to the Seat of Government, shall accordingly be removed thereto by their respective holders, and shall, after the said day, cease to be exercised elsewhere; and that the necessary expence of such removal shall be defrayed out of the duties on impost and tonnage, of which a sufficient sum is hereby appropriated.”

Upon examining the ground within the above described limits, and taking into consideration all circumstances, the President fixed upon the spot upon which the city has since been laid out, as the most proper for erecting the public buildings which are authorized to be prepared by the foregoing act.

But the eastern branch being made one of the boundaries, within which the district of ten miles square

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was to be laid out, an amendment of the preceding act was thought necessary, so as to include a convenient part of the said branch, and the land on the southeastern side of it, within the said district of ten miles square. A formal act for that purpose was accordingly passed on the 3d day of March, 1791.—By this means the Commissioners were enabled so to lay off the district of ten miles square, that the center thereof is made the center of the spot on which the City is laid out, as nearly as the nature and form of the ground of the City will permit. The district of ten miles square thereby includes the river Potomack for five miles above and the like distance below the middle of the City; and extends in the state of Virginia about three miles over the river.

The whole area of the City consists of upwards of four thousand acres.—The ground, on an average, is about forty feet above the water of the river. Although the whole, when taken together, appears to be nearly a level spot, yet it is found to consist of what may be called wavy land; and is sufficiently uneven to give many very extensive and beautiful views from various parts of it, as well as to effectually answer every purpose of cleansing and draining the city.

Two creeks enter the City, one from the eastern branch, the other from the Potomack, and take such directions as to be made to communicate with each

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other by a short canal.—By this means a water transportation, for heavy articles, is opened into the heart of the City.

No place has greater advantages of water, either for the supply of the City or for cleansing the streets, than this ground. The most obvious force is from the head waters of a creek which separates the City from Georgetown.—This creek takes its rise in ground higher than the City, and can readily be conveyed to every part of it.—But the grand object for this purpose, which has been contemplated by those best acquainted with the country hereabouts, and the circumstances attending it, and which has been examined with an eye to this purpose, by good judges, is the Potomack. The water of this river above the Great Falls, 14 miles from the city, is one hundred and eight feet higher than the tide-water. A small branch, called Watt's-Branch, just above the falls, goes in a direction towards the City. From this branch to the city, a canal may be made (and the ground admits of it very well) into which the river, or any part of it, may be turned and carried through the City.—By this means the water may not only be carried over the highest ground in the City—but if necessary, over the tops of the houses. This operation appears so far from being chimerical, that it is pronounced by good judges, who have examined the ground through, and over which it must pass, that it may be effected for

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perhaps less money than it has and will cost the Potomack Company, to make the river navigable at the Great and Little Falls, and to clear the bed of the river between them.

Should this be effected, the produce of the country will naturally be brought through it; and the situation afforded thereby for mills and manufactories of every kind, that require the aid of water, will be most excellent, and commensurate with any object.

The public buildings for the accommodation of the Congress, and the President of the United States, are begun, and progress with much spirit. They are on a scale equal to the magnitude of the objects for which they are preparing; and will, agreeable to the plans which have been adopted, be executed in a stile of architecture, chaste, magnificent and beautiful. They will be built with beautiful white stone; which is pronounced certainly equal, if not superior, to the best Portland stone, by persons who have been long experienced in working the first quality of Portland stone. The quantity of this stone is fully equal to any demand that can arise from [for] it. That used for the public buildings is from an island about 40 miles below the city, which has been purchased by the Commissioners, and from which, and a tract of land lying on the river in the neighborhood of it, (the right of getting stone from

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which, for 20 years, has also been purchased by the Commissioners,) it is supposed that enough of this stone may be obtained to answer every demand, however great.

Besides the buildings for the accommodation of the government of the United States, a very superb Hotel is erecting, the expence of which is defrayed by a lottery, the Hotel being the highest prize. This building, with its accommodations and dependencies, will perhaps be equal to any one of the kind in Europe.

The original proprietors of the land on which the City is laid out, in consideration of the great benefits which they expected to derive from the location of the city, conveyed, in trust, to the Commissioners, for the use of the public, and for the purpose of establishing the city, the whole of their respective lands which are included within the lines of the city, upon condition that, after retaining for the public the ground of the streets, and any number of squares that the President may think proper for public improvements or other public uses, the lots shall be fairly and equally divided between the public and the respective proprietors.

By this means the public had possession of more than ten thousand lots, from which funds are to be raised to defray the expence of the public buildings, (in addition to 192,000 dollars,* given by the States of Virginia and

* Virginia 120,000, and Maryland 72,000.

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Maryland, for that purpose,) and to effect such other things as it may be incumbent upon the public to do in the city. Between three and four thousand lots have been already sold by the Commissioners, and the average price at their public sales has exceeded two hundred and forty dollars a lot. The price of lots has lately risen very much, and a great increase of price is still expected, as the object comes to be more investigated, and better understood.

After furnishing very ample funds for the accomplishment of every object in the city, on the part of the public, a large surplus of lots will remain the property of the city, which hereafter may, and undoubtedly will be so applied, as to defray the annual expences incident to the city; and the citizens, and their property, will be

forever free from a heavy tax, which is unavoidable in other large cities.

Among the many advantages which will be derived to this city over almost all other large cities, from the circumstance of its being originally designed for the capital of a great nation, may be ranked as the foremost; the width of the streets, (none of which are less than ninety feet, and from that to one hundred and sixty,) and the attention which will be paid to levelling or regulating the streets upon a general principle, in the first instance, in such a manner as to avoid any future incon-

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venience to such buildings as may be erected in the early establishment of the city, and to give that delicity to them, in the several parts of the city, which will readily and effectually carry off all filth in the common sewers. These circumstances are of the highest importance, as they affect the health and the lives of the inhabitants.

Besides the advantages which the City of Washington will have, from its being the seat of government of the United States, from its being within a few miles of the center of the territory of the United States, from North to South, and nearly the center of population, and from the immediate commerce of the Potomack, it will receive an immense benefit from its intercourse with the country West of the Allegany mountains, through the Potomack, which offers itself as the most natural, and the nearest channel of commercial intercourse with that very extensive and rich country.

At present, the land-carriage between the navigable waters of the Monongahelia, (a fork of the Ohio,) and

the navigable waters of the Potomack, is less than 40 miles; and a good waggon road is open between the two waters. Men of judgment on the subject of inland navigation, have examined the ground between the highest branches of the Potomack, and those of the Ohio, and have been decidedly of opinion, that the land carriage between the two places where boats may come to

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each, can be reduced to fifteen miles; and they have nothing to convince them, that these waters may not, hereafter, be made to communicate with each other.

The settlers on the Ohio and Mississippi, will of course carry their heavy produce to a market down those rivers; but their returns will be most natural through the Potomack, for they cannot ascend the Western Waters, without great expence or much loss of time; the current there being so rapid, that a sharp boat with six oars can scarcely ascend fifteen miles a day.

The Fur and Peltry trade of the Great Lakes may be brought to the City of Washington, through the channel of the Potomack, four hundred miles nearer than to any other shipping port to which it has been carried heretofore.

Mr. Jefferson, in his notes on Virginia, mentions this subject in the following words:—"The Potomack offers itself under the following circumstances, for the trade of the Lakes, and the waters westward of Lake Erie. When it shall have entered that Lake, it must coast along its southern shore, on account of the number and excellence of its harbors; the northern, though shortest, having few harbors, and those unsafe.—Having

reached Cayahoga, to proceed on to New-York, it will have eight hundred and twenty-five miles, and five portages: Whereas it has but four hundred and twenty-

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five miles to Alexandria, its imporium on the Potomack, if it turns into Cayahoga, and passes through that, Beg Beaver, Ohio, Yohogany, (on Monongahela and Cheat,) and the Potomack; and there are but two portages; the first of which, (from Cayahogo to Beg Beaver) may be removed by uniting the sources of these waters, which are Lakes in the neighborhood of each other, and in a champaign country.—The other from the waters of the Ohio to the Potomack, will be from fifteen to forty miles, according to the trouble that shall be taken to approach the two navigations.—For the trade of the Ohio, or that which shall come into it from its own waters, or from the Mississippi, it is nearer through the Potomack to Alexandria, than to New York, by five hundred and eighty miles, and is interrupted by one portage only. There is another circumstance of difference.—The lakes themselves never freeze; but the communications between them freeze, and the Hudson's River itself is shut up by ice three months in the year; whereas the channel of the Chesapeak leads directly to a warm climate, the Southern parts of it rarely freeze at all, and whenever the Northern do, it is so near the sources of the rivers, that the frequent floods to which they are liable break the ice up immediately, so that vessels may pass through the winter, subject only to accidental and short delays."

In addition to the foregoing remarks, it may only be necessary to say, that there is not a river in America ca-

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pable of being rendered more secure from an attack by water than the Potomack. Its banks are every where high and bold, with the channel often not more than two hundred yards from the shore. Digg's-Point, about ten miles below the city of Washington, is remarkably well calculated for a battery; as all vessels coming up the river must present their bows at that point, for the distance of three miles; and after passing, their sterns are equally exposed for about the same distance; the middle of the channel there is not more than two hundred yards from the point.

It may not be amiss to subjoin the following extracts from the laws of Maryland; and the terms and conditions for regulating the materials and manner of the buildings and improvements, on the lots in the City of Washington.

Extract from the act of the General Assembly of Maryland, entitled, "An act for opening and extending the navigation of the river Potomack, in which the shares are made real estate."

"Be it enacted, That foreigners shall be and are hereby enabled to subscribe for and hold shares in the Potomack Company."

Extract from an Act of the General Assembly of Maryland, entitled, "An Act concerning the territory of Columbia and the City of Washington."

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"Be it enacted, That any foreigner may, by deed or will, hereafter to be made, take and hold lands within that part of the said territory which lies within this state, in the same manner as if he was a citizen of this state; and the same lands may be conveyed by him, and

transmitted to, and be inherited by his heirs or relations, as if he and they were citizens of this state; Provided, That no foreigner shall, in virtue hereof, be entitled to any further or other privilege of a citizen."

Terms and conditions declared by the President of the United States, for regulating the materials and manner of the buildings and improvements on the lots in the City of Washington.

1st. "That the outer and party-walls of all houses within the said city shall be built of brick or stone."

2d. "That all buildings on the streets shall be parallel thereto, and may be advanced to the line of the street, or withdraw therefrom, at the pleasure of the improver; but where any such building is about to be erected, neither the foundation nor party-walls shall be begun without first applying to the person or persons appointed by the Commissioners to superintend the buildings within the city, who will afterwards ascertain the lines of the walls to correspond with these regulations."

3d. "The walls of no house to be higher than forty

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feet to the roof in any part of the city; nor shall any be lower than thirty-five feet on any of the avenues."

4th. "That the person or persons appointed by the Commissioners to superintend the buildings, may enter on the land of any person to set out the foundation, and regulate the walls to be built between party and party, as to the breadth and thickness thereof; which foundation shall be laid equally on the lands of the persons between whom such party-walls are to be built, and shall be of the breadth and thickness determined by such person proper; and the first builder shall be reimbursed one moiety of the charge of such party-walls, or so much thereof, as the next builder shall have occa-

sion to make use of before such next builder shall any way use or break into the wall; the charge or value thereof to be set by the person or persons so appointed by the Commissioners."

5th. "As temporary conveniences will be proper for lodging workmen and securing materials for building, it is understood that such may be erected with the approbation of the Commissioners; but they may be removed or discontinued by the special order of the Commissioners."

6th. "The way into the squares being designed in a special manner for the common use, and convenience of the occupiers of the respective squares, the property in the same is reserved to the public, so that there may be

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an immediate interference on any abuse of the use thereof by any individual, to the nuisance or obstruction of others. The proprietors of the lots adjoining the entrance into the squares, on arching over the entrance and fixing gates in the manner the Commissioners shall approve, shall be entitled to divide the space over the arching, and build it up with the range of that line of the square."

7th. "No vaults shall be permitted under the streets, nor any encroachment on the foot way above, by steps, stoups, porches, cellar-doors, windows, ditches, or leaning walls, nor shall there be any projection over the streets other than the eaves of the houses, without the consent of the Commissioners."

8th. "These regulations are the terms and conditions, under and upon which conveyances are to be made, according to the deeds in trust of the lands within the city."

The End.

Note.—Here ends the matter contained in this edition. In a subsequent edition published in 1794 at New York two additional paragraphs appear as follows:—

This short and general description of the City of *Washington*, the River *Potomack*, and the adjacent country, will not give a full and adequate idea of the advantages there offered to men of capital and enterprise, as well as to adventurers of small property. To give a complete idea of these advantages, it would be necessary to specify particular instances, well known in *America*, of great profit in almost every kind of business, and of fortunes suddenly acquired, or doubled and trebled in a year or two, by purchases of lands or other real estate. It would be necessary to shew the value of money, demonstrated by the actual rate of interest, which is not less than *ten, twelve*, or even *fifteen* per cent. in some parts of *America*, and especially in the part here described.

It would be necessary to detail the new and singular circumstances of this young, fertile, and flourishing country; its rapid population, its free government, which leaves the genius of man totally unfettered; the pure morals of its inhabitants, which secure public and private felicity, and the infinity of new objects of speculation, which open certain prospects of accumulating immense wealth in a short period of time; circumstances which are unknown, and appear almost incredible to Europeans: But these things are well known in *America*, and they will doubtless be unfolded to foreigners, as fast as national policy will require. Were it *generally* known in *Europe*, that capital may be doubled every year in *America*, and that without the least hazard, it might awaken a spirit of speculation, which would too suddenly transfer immense capitals from their employment in valuable manufactures in

Europe, and actually injure this country, by raising the price of European commodities which we want. To open these prospects upon Europeans *gradually*, may answer a better purpose for both countries, and for this end the foregoing concise and general description is deemed amply sufficient.

THE END.